

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# State and Tribal Response Program Highlights



EPA Funding Provided to States and Tribes to Address Contaminated Land in their Communities

## REGION 1

**CONNECTICUT** – In December 2010, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to kick off its newest outreach initiative, the Remediation Roundtable. The Remediation Roundtable is an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information on the various site cleanup programs in Connecticut. The first roundtable was attended by environmental consultants, attorneys, DEP staff, EPA Brownfields grantees, and members of the business community. Topics included: updates on the DEP Remediation Division's LEAN initiatives, improving the Environmental Land Use Restriction process, improvements to the Division's Potable Water program, and revisions to Remediation Division guidance documents. The roundtables will be held every other month at the DEP office in Hartford. The meetings are open to the public and DEP welcomes input on topics for future roundtable discussions. Information on the Remediation Roundtable can be found at: <http://www.ct.gov/depr/remediationroundtable>.

## REGION 2

**NEW YORK** – The Paper Mill Island Park property is surrounded by the Seneca River and the New York State Barge Canal. The property was occupied by a paper mill from the mid-1800s until 1959; this was followed by numerous industrial and commercial enterprises through the late 1980s when the property was abandoned. The island was later donated to the Village of Baldwinsville which recognized the potential value of the property as part of a larger waterfront revitalization project. After acquiring the property, the village entered into a State Assistance Contract with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation—which uses Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee brownfields projects—to perform a site investigation and evaluate remedial alternatives for the property. As a result of the investigation, underground storage tanks and contaminated soil were removed, a clean soil cap was placed over the entire property, and the shoreline was stabilized to prevent erosion. The park now hosts concerts and events from May through September and has become a popular destination for residents and tourists. The park includes a world-class amphitheater, docks for boaters, and open space with paved walkways and benches.



The Paper Mill Island Park, located at the Seneca River, before (left) and after renovation.

## REGION 3

**DELAWARE** – The Center for Applied Demography & Survey Research at the University of Delaware used Section 128(a) Response Program funding from the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) to conduct a study to measure the economic impact of the Delaware Brownfields Program. The report evaluated the economic impact of brownfields development by measuring changes in the brownfield property's value and neighboring business activity. The data were collected from DNREC, the Delaware Department of Labor, the Delaware Economic Development Office, county tax assessment records, and the Center for Applied Demography & Survey Research. The study showed that brownfields development has positive impacts in New Castle County and Sussex County, but less so in Kent County. In New Castle County, brownfield property values increased 106% since 1998, more than 10 times district growth. Property values in Sussex County increased 166% since 2000, while the relevant district growth rate was 93%. However, brownfield property values in Kent County increased (4%) less than the district (22%). Overall, large economic benefits are generated from brownfields redevelopment in Delaware.

## REGION 4

**ALABAMA** – With original operations beginning as the Siluria Cotton Mill Company in 1904, this mill was once the largest employer in Shelby County. As with many locations throughout the country, this textile mill was the heart of the small community of Siluria, which is now a part of the City of Alabaster. The mill village included 120 cottages for employees and their families, stores, a hotel, a church, a school, doctor and dentist offices, and a movie theater. The facility, which was last operated as the Buck Creek Cotton Mill, closed for good in 1979 and soon after fell into disrepair and became a blight to local neighborhoods. In 2003, the City of Alabaster purchased



The Alabaster Senior Center in Alabama, which opened September 19, 2010.

the 22-acre property and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct an assessment of the property. Upon completion of the assessment, it was determined that all the buildings, with the exception of the old jail building, would be razed. In November 2009, the City of Alabaster, with the assistance of additional funding by a Shelby County Health Foundation grant and a Shelby County Community Center grant, broke ground on a new senior center. The Alabaster Senior Center was officially opened on September 19, 2010, and provides an array of activities and community function space for the senior citizens in the area. Activities at the center include a walking trail, exercise classes, crafts, and gardening.

## REGION 5

**LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE** – In 2007, the Leech Lake Brownfields program used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to perform a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on the Onigum Parish Hall that was suspected to have asbestos and lead paint contamination. The building, owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota, is adjacent to a Head Start Center. Soil sampling around the perimeter of the building conducted by Leech Lake Brownfields staff confirmed the soil exceeded the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Hazardous Substances Control Act (LLBO HSCA) cleanup standard for lead. In 2010, the Leech Lake Brownfields program, in accordance with the LLBO HSCA, required the owners to investigate the release of hazardous substances. The Band approved the plan submitted by the diocese that included demolition and soil remediation. The diocese's contractors carried out the demolition, removed lead-contaminated soil, conducted verification sampling, and backfilled portions of the property, in compliance with Leech Lake laws and the Leech Lake Brownfields program requirements.



*Onigum Parish Hall prior to demolition. The Head Start Center playground is on the right.*

## REGION 6

**TEXAS** – The Exell Helium Plant is a 330-acre federal facility that manufactured helium from the 1940s until the 1970s. The north section of the facility contained the plant and employee quarters while the southern portion encompassed waste disposal areas, including an incinerator ash landfill, evaporation and treatment ponds, and a chromium sludge disposal trench. In 2005, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) entered the property into Texas' voluntary cleanup program to facilitate cleanup. Cleanup activities consisted of the excavation and disposal of impacted soils and an institutional control was used to restrict access to the landfills on the southern portion of the property. Unaffected soils from the property were used in the creation of the landfills' cover. The landfills were also re-vegetated with native grasses and plants to prevent erosion and restore natural conditions. BLM received a Ready for Reuse determination for the property which was issued jointly by EPA and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality—a Section 128(a) Response Program funding recipient. The Exell Helium Plant Ready for Reuse determination will facilitate public sale by the U.S. General Services Administration, as well as inform new owners of environmental conditions when planning future development.

## REGION 7

**NEBRASKA** – The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to form a new partnership with the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) to promote brownfields redevelopment. Nebraska is served entirely by public power and NPPD is the state's largest electric utility. Twice a year, NPPD hosts video conferences with economic development experts from its Economic Development Team and Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) to present information about resources for community growth and development. NPPD provides the facility, technology and resources across the state, and encourages small rural communities and their economic development leaders to participate. This mutually beneficial relationship continues to evolve as both organizations include the other in outreach efforts. When NDEQ's Brownfields Program organizes workshops, NPPD is encouraged to present and participate. In addition, NPPD facilitated the Brownfields Program's technical session at the Nebraska Economic Development Association 2010 Fall Conference. Since the start of the partnership, nearly a dozen rural communities have used the NDEQ's Brownfields Program to clean up properties for economic redevelopment.



## REGION 8

**COLORADO** – On December 14, 2010, the Colorado Brownfields Foundation (CBF) hosted a ribbon cutting event to unveil a new home on the site of a former clandestine methamphetamine operation (meth lab) in Northglenn (pop. 31,575). Once the meth lab was discovered by police, the house was sealed by the city, and subsequently the property was foreclosed on. In partnership with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), CBF evaluated redevelopment options and structured a public-private partnership to acquire the property from the bank. CDPHE used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct assessment and cleanup activities on the property and CBF partner with a local homebuilder to design and construct a modern, energy efficient home. The home was completed in December 2010 with the cutting of a bright red ribbon by Northglenn's Mayor Joyce Downing in front of a crowd of neighbors and supporters. Located across from an elementary school, the three-bedroom home is now awaiting its new family.



*The three-bedroom home in Northglenn which now graces the site of a former meth lab.*

## REGION 10

**SWINOMISH INDIAN TRIBAL COMMUNITY** – The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community is using Section 128(a) Response Program funding to increase its ability to respond to environmental concerns which includes working actively to improve coordination with state agencies (in the State of Washington) to provide input regarding cleanup plans for properties of concern which impact tribal land. Another focus is preventing the creation of brownfields through education and outreach. The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community has a unique Environmental Education Program which is managed by its Water Resources Program. Water Resources Specialists and field technicians in partnership with an environmental educator work with "Tox-in-a-Box," an educational toolkit created by the University of Washington that specializes in teaching the basics of toxicology. The program has been presented to a variety of groups over the past two years, including the La Conner schools and Swinomish La Conner Boys and Girls Club. Presentations have also been made at events such as Swinomish Earth Enhancement days. The Swinomish Environmental Education Program expands each year with new programs and new audiences.

## REGION 9

**NEVADA** – The Nevada Brownfields Program used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to attend the Nevada Association of Counties annual conference held on November 17 - 19, 2010 in Reno. State Brownfields staff had the opportunity to meet with county officials and stakeholders to promote the Brownfields Program and explain how it has helped municipalities throughout the state. A number of public and private organizations from across the state also participated in this unique event that brought municipal officials together for meetings. In addition, the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP) presented posters that provide an overview of brownfields projects across the state.